

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 16486 01 OF 02 291710Z
ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 ARA-10 EUR-08 IO-06 ISO-00 SS-15
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O 291851Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8512
INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USINT HAVANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 16486

NAIROBI FOR CODEL DIGGS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP, MOPS, PINT, EFIN, CG, AO, BE
SUBJECT: CODEL DIGGS: MEETING AT BELGIAN FOREIGN
MINISTRY ON ZAIRE AND ANGOLA

REF: A) STATE 213802, B) BRUSSELS 16278

1. SUMMARY - CONGRESSMAN DIGGS, COMMITTEE STAFF
DIRECTOR WARD AND EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER MET
AUGUST 25 WITH BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S CHEF DE
CABINET ALFRED CAHEN AND HAD A 45 MINUTE CONVERSATION
ON AFRICA, FOCUSSED ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ZAIRE
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PAGE 02 BRUSSE 16486 01 OF 02 291710Z

AND ANGOLA. END SUMMARY

2. CAHEN LAUNCHED INTO HIS USUAL BRIEFING ON ZAIRE,
STRESSING FAMILIAR THEMES LIKE THE LACK OF AN
ALTERNATIVE TO MOBUTU AND THAT MOBUTU, WITH HIS
CONSUMMATE POLITICAL FEEL, MAINTAINS A FRAGILE
POLITICAL BALANCE (E.G. EVEN SHABA I AND II DID NOT

DESTABILIZE ZAIRE) WITHOUT WHICH ZAIRE WOULD DESCEND INTO TRIBAL WARFARE AND CHAOS.

3. CAHEN EMPHASIZED TO CONGRESSMAN DIGGS THAT MOBUTU KNOWS WHAT HE HAS TO DO TO REFORM HIS COUNTRY. HE SAID THAT THE PARIS FIVE MUST MAINTAIN THE PRESSURE ON MOBUTU TO FOLLOW THROUGH, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME MOVING WITH THE UPMOST TACT SO AS NOT TO RUFFLE THE FEATHERS OF THE YOUNG, EDUCATED ELITE AND TRIGGER A REACTION OF NATIONAL PRIDE. CAHEN CHARACTERIZED THIS TACT AND RESPECT FOR ZAIRIAN SOVEREIGNTY AS A "PERMANENT DIALOGUE", WITHOUT WHICH THE ZAIRIANS WILL VIEW THE WESTERN EFFORT AS NEO-COLONIALISM AND TURN AGAINST BOTH THE MOBUTU REGIME AND THE WESTERN NATIONS SEEKING TO HELP ZAIRE.

4. CAHEN SAID THAT MOBUTU IS AWARE OF THE IRONY THAT IF ECONOMIC, ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLITICAL REFORMS ARE IMPLEMENTED AND WORK "REASONABLY WELL," THEN THERE WILL BE CREATED A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO MOBUTU WHICH DOES NOT NOW EXIST, AND HE COULD THEN BE REPLACED.

5. ANGOLA. IN RESPONSE TO CONGRESSMAN'S DIGGS' QUESTION ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CURRENT ANGOLAN-ZAIRIAN RAPPROCHEMENT, CAHEN SAID THAT DEVELOPMENTS ARE POSITIVE EVEN IF THEY DO NOT LAST FOR A LONG
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PAGE 03 BRUSSE 16486 01 OF 02 291710Z

TIME. HE SAID THAT ANGOLA AND ZAIRE WERE HURTING EACH OTHER AND THAT BOTH NATIONS NOW NEED A PAUSE. THEREFORE, AFTER AN APPLICATION OF WESTERN PRESSURE, THE TWO GOVERNMENTS CAME TO AN UNDERSTANDING MUCH FASTER THAN MANY HAD ANTICIPATED. CAHEN SAID THAT BOTH ANGOLA AND ZAIRE HAD ALREADY BENEFITED FROM THE AGREEMENT, WITNESS MOBUTU'S REDUCED SUPPORT OF UNITA AND NETO'S MOVING OF THE EX-KATANGA GENDARMES AWAY FROM THE BORDER. HE SAID THAT THE QUESTION OF THE BENGUELA RAILROAD WAS STILL UNCLEAR.

6. CAHEN TOLD CONGRESSMAN DIGGS THAT THE WEST'S NOT WISHING TO GET INVOLVED IN WARFARE IN CENTRAL AFRICA WAS THE MAIN REASON THAT THE PARIS FIVE HAD PUSHED MOBUTU TOWARDS NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA. HE STRESSED THAT THE KEY UNKNOWN WAS WHETHER THE USSR AND CUBA ALSO WANTED TO AVOID CONFLICT IN CENTRAL AFRICA OR WHETHER THIS IS JUST A PAUSE BEFORE THEY START SOMETHING ELSE. HE SAID ANGOLANS WANT THE NAMIBIAN SOLUTION TO WORK OUT, AS A FAILURE WOULD BRING MORE TURMOIL AND CIVIL WAR TO ANGOLA. CAHEN SAID THAT THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT HAS SENT MANY

SIGNALS THAT THEY WANT IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE WEST; HE CITED AS EXAMPLES THE MCHENTRY-JUNIOR MISSION TO LUANDA, EC COMMISSIONER CHEYSSON'S RECENT ANGOLAN TRIP, AND THE MANY CONTACTS THAT THE BELGIANS HAVE HAD IN BRUSSELS WITH ANGOLAN AMBASSADOR LUIS JOSE DE ALMEIDA.

6. FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET'S SEPTEMBER 6-9 TRIP TO ANGOLA. CAHEN TOLD DIGGS THAT HE WOULD BE GOING

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 16486 02 OF 02 291716Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BRUSSELS 16486

NAIROBI FOR CODEL DIGGS

ALONG ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S TRIP TO LUANDA AND WOULD SHARE HIS IMPRESSIONS WITH CONGRESSMAN DIGGS IN WASHINGTON WHEN THEY HOPEFULLY WILL MEET IN EARLY OCTOBER. CAHEN SAID THE SIMONET TRIP TO ANGOLA FITS INTO FRAMEWORK OF BELGIAN DESIRE TO HAVE A GENERAL AFRICAN POLICY AND NOT JUST A POLICY BASED ON BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH FORMER COLONIES. HE STRESSED THAT ALTHOUGH BELGIUM WILL NOT PLAY A "MEDIATOR'S ROLE" BETWEEN ANGOLA AND ZAIRE (THAT WOULD BE "NEO-

COLONIALIST"), NEVERTHELESS BELGIUM WOULD BE PREPARED TO PLAY A USEFUL ROLE IN KEEPING THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA ON THE TRACKS. HE
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PAGE 02 BRUSSE 16486 02 OF 02 291716Z

EMPHASIZED TO DIGGS THAT SIMONET WOULD NOT BE PLAYING A SEPARATE ROLE IN THIS ENDEAVOR, BUT WOULD BE CARRYING ON THE POLICY OF THE PARIS FIVE IN PROMOTING IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA. HE SAID THAT SIMONET WOULD SHARE HIS IMPRESSIONS WITH SECRETARY VANCE AND AMBASSADOR YOUNG AT THE UNGA. CONGRESSMAN DIGGS SAID THIS MUTUAL SHARING OF IMPRESSIONS ON ANGOLA SHOULD BE USEFUL FOR BOTH COUNTRIES.

7. FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DEPUTY CHEF DE CABINET ANDRE ONKELINX COVERED MUCH OF THE SAME GROUND ON SIMONET'S UPCOMING ANGOLA TRIP WITH US AUGUST 28, SAYING THAT SIMONET WOULD APPRECIATE ANY BACKGROUND AND GUIDANCE THAT WE WISHED TO PROVIDE HIM PRIOR TO THE SEPTEMBER 6 DEPARTURE. STRESSING AGAIN THAT THE SIMONET TRIP SHOULD BEST BE VIEWED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PARIS FIV FOLLOW-UP, ONKELINX SAID BELGIANS WOULD ESPECIALLY APPRECIATE RECEIVING THE LATEST U.S. VIEWS ON THE QUESTIONS OF REFUGEES, THE BORDER VERIFICATION COMMISSION, THE BENGUELA RAILROAD, AND HOW THE WEST MIGHT ASSIST IN HELPING COPE WITH THESE PROBLEMS. ONKELINX SAID THAT THE BELGIANS WERE ALSO CONSULTING ON ANGOLA WITH THE GERMANS AND THE FRENCH PRIOR TO SIMONET'S DEPARTURE (CAHEN IS TO SEE ELYSEE ADVISOR JOURNIAC IN PARIS ON SEPT. 1).

8. ACTION REQUESTED: ANY INFORMATION OR VIEWS THAT THE DEPARTMENT WISHES TO PROVIDE TO BELGIANS PRIOR TO SIMONET'S ANGOLAN TRIP SHOULD REACH US PRIOR TO COB SEPTEMBER 6. CHAMBERS

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